

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1-10. (cancelled)

11. (previously presented) A method comprising:

determining whether to supply alternate content to a user of an interactive television service that provides video content through a content signal, the alternate content to be cached on a terminal device located at a premises of the user;

responsive to determining to supply the alternate content to the user of the interactive television service, sending the alternate content to the terminal device located at the premises of the user;

generating a hot key signal indicating availability of the alternate content; and

inserting the hot key signal into a content signal transmitted to the user from the interactive television service provider via a network with which the user and the interactive television service provider are connected;

wherein the hot key signal causes instructions to present for display an on-screen image overlaid on the video content, wherein the on-screen-image indicates availability of the alternate content, and wherein selection of the on-screen image by the user results in the terminal device supplying the alternate content.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein determining whether to supply alternate content to the user is based on information supplied by a provider of the video content.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein determining whether to supply alternate content to the user is based on information generated by the interactive television service provider.

14. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the hot key signal comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) data packet, the IP data packet having a header portion and a body portion, the body portion having a data field indicating a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) where the alternate content is located.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the alternate content is related in subject matter to the video content currently being viewed by the user.

16. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a cable network.

17. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a satellite network.

18. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a Fiber-To-The-Curb (FTTC) network.

19. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH) network.

20. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a Very high speed Digital Subscriber Line (VDSL) network.

21-39. (cancelled)

40. (previously presented) A system comprising:

a head-end transport portion to transmit content signals over a network;

a hot key generation portion to determine whether to supply alternate content to one or more users of an interactive television service, the alternate content to be cached on a terminal device located at a premises of the one or more users, responsive to determining to supply alternate content to one or more users to an interactive television service, send the alternate content to the terminal device located at the premises of the one or more users, and generate a hot key signal indicating availability of the alternate content;

wherein the hot key signal causes instructions to present for display an on-screen image overlaid on a television program that is displayed based on the content signals, wherein the on-screen-image indicates availability of the alternate content, and wherein selection of the on-screen image by the user results in the terminal device supplying the alternate content.

41. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the head-end transport portion receives the hot key signal from the hot key generation portion, multiplexes the hot key signal with the content signal.

42. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the hot key generation portion determines whether to supply alternate content to one or more users of an interactive television service based on information supplied by a content provider.

43. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the hot key generation portion determines whether to supply alternate content to one or more users of an interactive television service based on information generated by the interactive television service provider.

44. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the hot key signal comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) data packet, the IP data packet having a header portion and a body portion, the

body portion having a data field indicating a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) where the alternate content is located.

45. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the alternate content is related to content currently being viewed by the one or more users.

46. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the network comprises a cable network.

47. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the network comprises a satellite network.

48. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the network comprises a Fiber-To-The-Curb (FTTC) network.

49. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the network comprises a Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH) network.

50. (original) The system of claim 40, wherein the network comprises a Very high speed Digital Subscriber Line (VDSL) network.

51 -68. (cancelled)

69. (previously presented) A machine readable medium having stored thereon a series of instructions, the instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

determine whether to supply alternate content to one or more users of an interactive television service, the alternate content to be cached on a terminal device located at a premises of the one or more users;

responsive to determining to supply alternate content to one or more users to an interactive television service, send the alternate content to the terminal device located at the premises of the one or more users;

generate a hot key signal indicating availability of the alternate content; and insert the hot key signal into a content signal transmitted to the one or more users from an interactive television service provider via a network with which the one or more users and the interactive television service provider are connected;

wherein the hot key signal causes instructions to present for display an on-screen image overlaid on a television program that is displayed based on the content signal, wherein the on-screen-image indicates availability of the alternate content, and wherein selection of the on-screen image by the user results in the terminal device supplying the alternate content.

70. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 11, wherein determining whether to supply alternate content to one or more users of an interactive television service is based on information supplied by a content provider.

71. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 11, wherein determining whether to supply alternate content to one or more users of an interactive television service is based on information generated by the interactive television service provider.

72. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 11, wherein the hot key signal comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) data packet, the IP data packet having a header portion and a body portion, the body portion having a data field indicating a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) where the alternate content is located.

73. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the alternate content is related to content currently being viewed by the one or more users.

74. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a cable network.

75. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a satellite network.

76. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a Fiber-To-The-Curb (FTTC) network.

77. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH) network.

78. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the network comprises a Very high speed Digital Subscriber Line (VDSL) network.

79-86. (cancelled)